

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 PA-03 CU-04 L-03 /100 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/GRK:GTCHURCHILL:LAB

8/31/73 EXT. 20930

APPROVED BY NEA:RPDAVIES

EUR/EE:HGILMORE (INFO)

USIA:JKEOGH (INFO)

USIA/IEE - MR. CALLOWAY (INFO)

USIA/IWE - MR. GILDNER (INFO)

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R 312303Z AUG 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 174671

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, GR, YO

SUBJECT: OPENING OF USIS CENTER IN SKOPJE

1. GREEK CHARGE NOMIKOS CALLED ON INSTRUCTIONS OF ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIES TO CONVEY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT OUR OPENING A USIS CENTER IN SKOPJE. COUNTRY DIRECTOR CHURCHILL WAS PRESENT.

2. NOMIKOS SAID THE USG HAD PROCEEDED WITHOUT PRIOR DISCUSSIONS OR CONVINCING EXPLANATIONS, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE FULLY AWARE OF THE GREEK SENSITIVITIES ABOUT THE "MACEDONIAN" QUESTION. GREECE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO RESPECT US POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES, AND THUS REFRAINED FROM RELATIONS WITH NORTH VIETNAM AND NORTH KOREA AND MADE CONTACT WITH CHINA ONLY AFTER THE US HAD DONE SO. GREECE WOULD EXPECT THE US TO BE EQUALLY CAREFUL ABOUT GREEK SENSITIVITIES.

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3. NOMIKOS SAID HIS GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED THAT THE

YUGOSLAVS WILL EXPLOIT THE CENTER TO THEIR OWN ENDS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE TRANSLATION OF USIA DIRECTOR KEOGH'S OPENING ADDRESS IN SKOPJE CONTAINED INNUENDOS THAT WERE NOT IN THE ENGLISH VERSION. THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO WATCH CAREFULLY TO BE SURE THAT THE CENTER DOES NOT CREATE PROBLEMS.

4. NOMIKOS ALSO STATED THAT THERE WAS LITTLE CONNECTION OR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE US AND GREEK EMBASSIES IN BELGRADE, THROUGH NO FAULT ON THE GREEK SIDE. THIS COOLNESS SEEMED REGRETTABLE BETWEEN EMBASSIES OF ALLIED COUNTRIES.

5. MR. DAVIES POINTED OUT THAT THE US IS AWARE OF THE HISTORY OF THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION AND HAS NO INTENTION OF INVOLVING ITSELF IN ANY WAY. WE RECOGNIZE BOTH YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE IN THEIR PRESENT BOUNDARIES AND THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE SUBDIVISIONS. IN THE CONTEXT OF A DECLARATION ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS ADOPTED BY YUGOSLAVIA AND THE US IN 1971, WE ARE OPENING USIS CENTERS IN A NUMBER OF YUGOSLAV CITIES INCLUDING REGIONAL CAPITALS. NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND ESPECIALLY NO IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION, SHOULD BE DRAWN FROM THIS ACTIVITY. EXPLOITATION OF THE CENTERS SEEMS UNLIKELY AS THEIR OBJECTIVE IS TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF THE US. THE CENTERS DO NOT INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN POLITICAL QUESTIONS; THEY MERELY OFFER SUCH FACILITIES AS A READING ROOM, INFORMATION ON THE UNITED STATES, ADVICE TO STUDENTS, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE UNITED STATES. THEY DO NOT CARRY MATERIALS RELATING TO YUGOSLAVIA OR TO GREECE EXCEPT IN THIS CONTEXT, AND CERTAINLY NOT TO MACEDONIA.

6. MR. DAVIES HOPED NOMIKOS WOULD REASSURE HIS GOVERNMENT THAT OPENING THE CENTER HAS NO RELATIONSHIP TO THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION. HE SAID HE WOULD CONVEY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN ABOUT EXPLOITATION TO MR. KEOGH AND TO OUR EMBASSY IN BELGRADE. WE WILL, OF COURSE, TAKE ANY NECESSARY MEASURES TO AVOID EXPLOITATION OF THE SKOPJE CENTER. REGARDING COOPERATION BETWEEN US AND GREEK
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EMBASSIES IN BELGRADE, MR. DAVIES SAID HE WAS SURE OUR AMBASSADOR AND STAFF IN BELGRADE SHARE OUR HIGH REGARD FOR OUR GREEK ALLY. ROGERS

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